

REMARKS

I. Formalities

Claims 1, 2, 4-20, 22, and 23 remain in the subject patent application. Claims 1 and 20 are amended and claims 3 and 21 are canceled herein. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter is added herein.

II. Remarks Directed to the Allowed and Objected-To Claims

The continued allowance of claims 11-19 is noted with approval and thanks.

Claims 3-8 and 21 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but the Office Action stated that the claims would be allowable if they were rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants wish to thank Examiner Mandala for this indication of allowable subject matter.

In accordance with the suggestion in the Office Action, claims 1 and 20 have been rewritten to include, respectively, the limitations of claims 3 and 21. Therefore, claim 1 and the claims that depend therefrom, namely claims 2 and 4-10, are in condition for allowance. Similarly, claim 20 and the claims that depend therefrom, namely claims 22 and 23, are also in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

Applicants have made an earnest attempt to place this case in condition for allowance. In light of the amendments and remarks set forth above, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of all of the pending claims.

No fees are believed to be due in connection with this paper. However, the Commissioner for Patents is hereby authorized to charge any fees necessitated by this Response, or credit any overpayment, to Account No. 02-4467.

If there are matters that can be discussed by telephone to further the prosecution of this application, Applicants invite Examiner Mandala to call the undersigned attorney at the Examiner's convenience.

Respectfully submitted,



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I hereby certify that this document (and any referred to as being attached or enclosed) is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service, mailing label No. **EV199938385US** on **February 8, 2006** and addressed to Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

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